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Richard Booth
Chief, TMDL/Basin Planning Unit
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd
So. Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Re: Priority projects for Triennial Review of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan)

Dear Mr. Booth,

As a scientist who has been involved in a variety of research projects in support of developing standards and guidance for water quality in the Lahontan Region, I have produced work resulting in an aquatic invertebrate bioassessment index for the Region, sediment and invertebrate measures of impaired condition on Squaw Creek, and many other assessments and reviews of the health of stream habitat and water in the Sierra. More recently I've done work under research grants from the Truckee River Watershed Council (and earlier from Lahontan) to study the condition of biological health in the Middle Truckee with regard to the relation of deposited sediment on the diversity and types of indicator invertebrate organisms. These studies collectively can be used to identify how and where sediments are impairing aquatic health of the river and tools that can be used to assess ongoing changes and track areas of improvement or degradation in this aspect of water quality where it might occur. Suspended sediment standards alone do not address impacts to aquatic life health, are episodic in nature, and seem to be uncoupled from the deposition patterns observed. So I encourage, as part of prioritizing projects for the triennial review, that LRWQCB consider adopting a standard for the Truckee River TMDL for deposited/embedded sediment. I'd be happy to advise on how this might be done, using results of past research (reports available) and strategy for how monitoring can inform management and the achievement of standards.

Best Regards

David B. Herbst, PhD, research biologist